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ANTH 206

[Ethnography & Ethnology](http://anth206.wikispaces.com/Ethnography+%26+Ethnology)

The Grocery Store

**Introduction:**

After working at a grocery store for four years, I noticed some behaviors that people have while shopping. Some people would say working at a grocery store means you are doing the same thing everyday, and I agree until a certain point. Some days there were things that were very strange and you never know what kind of customers you will have. I wanted to focus on some of the patterns that I noticed people have during grocery shopping. In the past years I have noticed a shift in shopping routines and even the people that go shopping. It used to be considered women’s work to do the grocery shopping. Nowadays I have noticed more and more men doing the grocery shopping and I have thought to myself this is a little strange that it is changing. More men are in charge if the grocery shopping and more men even cook. My father happens to be one of these men, because my mother is always at work on weekends which seems to be the most popular time for grocery shopping and stocking up for the week. Grocery shopping also used to be a family outing for me when I was younger, the whole family would go together and I have been seeing less of that lately as well.

So I began to become a little curious as to if this is just how it seems or if it’s really true. I wanted to conduct this experiment to test out my thoughts by observing the grocery store. This experiment would really help me see if it was a fact and was true or was just something that seemed as though it was true. The purpose of this experiment was to see how many men versus women go grocery shopping.

**Methodology:**

My study was based on observations at a grocery store. It was mainly focused on gender and which gender does more of the grocery shopping. Since this was a gender study I chose a grocery store that many of us know of which happens to be where I work. I also chose this store because it is located near my home, and I know many of the people that shop there. QFC has been a store that many people rely on for their groceries from the bakery, to the produce and of course the deli. We even have a pharmacy that many people use. This QFC was located in Mill Creek. It is located near a post office, nail salon, teriyaki place and supplement store. This store seems like a very popular quick stop for dinner so I knew it would be the right place to observe people. The day I did my observing was Friday on July 30, 2010 from 4:30-11pm. while I was working. I chose to do it this day because many people come in on Fridays and do their weekend or whole week long grocery shopping so they are free for the weekend of that task.

I believe many women think that men don’t like to shop, I know I am one of those women but after working at this tore for four years I realized I am very wrong. This made me very curious to see how many men really do shop for groceries as compared to women. I observed the genders of people that came through the store but I also counted families that came into the store as well so my data wouldn’t be skewed.

**Data Analysis:**

I observed the QFC in Mill Creek July 30, 2010 on a Friday from 4:30-11pm. I put a tally mark every time someone came through my line to keep track of how many men, women, couples and families came through. At the end of the night I added up how many were in each category. The results can be rather surprising to people who haven’t actually noticed what I did after working there for four years.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Men | Women | Couples | Families |
| 56 | 40 | 23 | 5 |

From my results this data shows a significant increase in the amount of men as opposed to women that went grocery shopping within this 7 ½ hour period. Even though there were more men that went grocery shopping something I noticed was that many of them had just come for beer or somewhere in their order was beer. Many of them had their children come along with them as well. When it came to the women there was less beer and almost all of them had their children with them.

**Cross-Cultural Comparison:**

(Will be done after August 1st)

**Conclusion:**

When it comes to grocery shopping in the year 2010, things have very much changed. Men are taking over more of the household duties even in the kitchen, while their wives are out in the working world. This probably would have been seen as odd in the olden days where it was expected in society for a woman to do her job as a housewife but now men are also doing the cooking and cleaning. More men have become comfortable with making a quick stop at the grocery store to pick up dinner or even grocery shop to stock up for the whole week. The men that come though my line even bring their children along. This is a hard task in itself to watch them while trying to shop.

The number of men doing the grocery shopping seems to be increasing everyday. The night I observed was a Friday, and 56 men came though my line when only 40 women did. Many of these people brought their children along. Another thing that I found strange was only 5 families came through. I remember when I was a child many of my friends and I would all have to go grocery shopping with our parents and it would be a family outing. It seems life these days is far too fast paced to do that any longer. Something I would like to look into besides what I got from this gender study for grocery shopping is why my results played out the way they did. Why are men doing more of the grocery shopping now? This would be very interesting to find out, because the world as we know it is changing everyday.